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ABSTRACT

In a study of the effectiveness of professional development for teachers of language minority students, 30 teachers enrolled in a course on language minority education were pre- and post-tested for changes in theories and beliefs regarding different cultures, languages, their own sense of effectiveness, and educational issues relating to language minority educational programs. The teachers also kept daily journals about their opinions and feelings during the course. Four of the teachers were chosen randomly to be observed and interviewed concerning changes in their instructional approaches and philosophies. Results of the initial survey and journal analysis showed subtle changes in areas of teacher efficacy, positive attitudes toward other cultures, and increased knowledge about schooling for language minority students. They also showed small changes in attitude. Findings of the followup study indicate clearly that the four teacher had changed during the study's 9-month span. New teaching techniques had been incorporated into classroom instruction and were used comfortably and routinely. All four had decided to continue their professional development and expressed the importance of empowering students with a feeling of pride. (MSE)

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Perspectives on Fostering Change in Teachers of Language Minority Students

A Paper Presented
at the
Annual Meeting of the
American Educational Research Association
in
San Francisco, CA

March 29, 1989

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BACKGROUND.

In recent years the most prevailing topics in educational discourse have been school reform, effective schools, school improvement, effective teachers, excellence, at risk students, at risk teachers and so forth. Underlying all of these topics is the basic assumption that schools must change to meet the evolving needs of today's diverse student population. Educators and researchers often speak as if the unit of change is the school. It is the contention of this author that the school is not the unit of change: the unit of change must be the individual teacher or educator. Educators will need to reevaluate their lives on a number of levels if real change is to occur. Sarason(1982) argues that school systems are not independent. They are embedded into many different "systems" and these will have to change if the change is to be successfully introduced and maintained. Educators then will have to come to understand this embeddedness and to understand the relationship among such systems as those found in politics, the family, the community, the schools, the universities, financial institutions, religious organizations, and government. Sarason also contends that it is all too simplistic to pinpoint a problem in schools and to propose changes within schools. This mentality fosters change that is remedial and temporary.

Attempts to transform schools through changes based on remediation have failed. Costly reforms which were aimed at helping especially poor, minority students, such as Chapter 1 Reading programs and Title VII bilingual education programs have failed. Drop out rates for black and white students stand at 25 percent and 14 percent respectively (Jusenius & Duarte, 1983). Drop out rates for Mexican-American and mainland Puerto Rican students range from 40 and 50 percent. The drop out rate for native American students is twice the national average and even approaches 100 percent in some school districts (Gilliland, 1986). Clearly, traditional schooling is not working for a growing percentage

of the general school population. Cummins (1986) contends that until educators become advocates for changing the systems which have impact on schools, change will not occur.

This scenario — we must change the world if schools are to improve— can be interpreted in a very depressing way if we accept the philosophy that the efforts of individuals will make no difference in the betterment in the lives of children. Anyone who has spent time in classrooms in schools knows that individual teachers do make a difference. If positive changes were to occur in the lives of individual teachers and if these changes were compounded, the cumulative effect would certainly be felt in individual school buildings. A small part of the solution then would be to effect change in teachers and to keep children from dropping out. The underlying assumption is, of course, that if teachers improve, students will benefit.

The purpose of this paper is to describe one study which focuses on teacher change as it occurs through the process of personal and professional development It is assumed that teachers' thought processes and change in behavior are interrelated, and that thoughts can be linked to a teacher's theories and beliefs (Clark & Peterson, 1986). The underlying assumption is that if a teacher's theories and beliefs change then change will also occur in that teacher's observable behavior.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study was begun in July, 1988. At that time thirty teachers who were enrolled in a graduate level survey course entitled Foundations of Language Minority Education were invited to participate. The teachers were asked to complete a pre- and post-attitudinal rating scale which was designed to detect

changes in the theories and beliefs that the teachers had regarding different cultures, different languages, their own sense of efficacy and educational issues that relate to language minority educational programs. The teachers were also asked to keep daily journals and to write about their opinions and feelings as the course progressed over a four week time span. The class itself was designed in a participatory fashion involving a great deal of cooperative group work. The course covered the history of language minority education, legal and legislative issues, theories of learning and language acquistion, and methodologies for teaching language minority students. Throughout the following school year these teachers were able to attend occasional workshops and to get together in small groups to discuss issues and concerns that might arise. In January and February of the following year four of these teachers were randomly selected to be observed and interviewed. The results of these data collection procedures will be discussed in the following sections.

The original purpose of the four observations was to determine if the four teachers in question had undergone a process of change within the last nine months. It was also the intent of these observations to attempt to determine to what extent these teachers had incorporated new approaches into their existing repertoires of models of teaching and to determine if their individual philosophies of teaching had changed. In order to look for the use of methods, each teacher was observed for at least half a day. Immediately following the observation, the teachers were interviewed regarding their life histories and and their theories and beliefs about education.

Before being observed the teachers were requested to follow their usual routines and not to do anything they normally would not do. In fact the teachers were led to believe that the focus of the observation would be the students. Teachers one and two taught in high schools and teachers three and four taught

in elementary schools. The four observations were fairly wide open in that everything that could be noted was described. Special attention was paid, however, to the methods used by each teacher.

ATTITUDE RATING SCALES AND JOURNALS

The Attitude Rating Scales used was a 43 item instrument designed to detect changes in teachers' theories and beliefs regarding their own effectiveness as a teacher and change agent in their schools; their feelings about people from other cultures; their feelings about learning other languages; and their opinions about how language minority students can best learn in schools. Answers were recorded on a scale of one to five -- one being "strongly disagree" and five being "strongly agree."

The results of comparing pre- and past-scores using a T test analysis indicated that differences in scores were not significant at the .05 level. The results of looking at raw data, however, did indicate subtle changes in the areas of teacher efficacy, positive feelings toward other cultures, and increased knowledge about schooling for language minority education. It is assumed that broad changes were not observed because teachers already had positive attitudes and were already somewhat knowledgeable about programs for language minority students.

Findings indicated small changes in attitudes in these three areas. It is hypothesized that greater change was not observed because most teachers already had somewhat positive attitudes to begin with. Even though the results of the attitude surveys were interesting, the most revealing source of data came from the personal journals that each teacher kept over the four-week period. See Table I.

TABLE I.

TEACHER EFFICACY

Item #

20. I can change the lives of the children I teach.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Neutral	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
pre-post	pre-post	pre-post	pre-post	pre-post
1 → 0	0 → 0	2 → 1	10 → 6	16 → 22

27. If I had a choice, I would prefer to do a job that was challenging rather than one that was easy.

1	2	3	4	5
0 → 0	0 → 0	2 → 0	8 → 13	10 → 17

ATTITUDES TOWARD OTHER LANGUAGES/CULTURES

4. Anglos should make a greater effort to learn the Spanish language.

1	2	3	4	5
3 → 0	2 → 2	9 → 6	10 → 10	5 → 11

9. The culture brought from Latin America has enriched the culture of the U.S.

1	2	3	4	5
0 → 0	1 → 0	2 → 4	9 → 6	18 → 19

24. Spanish speaking children ought to have Spanish bilingual teachers

1	2	3	4	5
2 → 2	4 → 1	3 → 2	10 → 7	10 → 18

TABLE I.

INCREASED KNOWLEDGE OF PROGRAMMATIC ISSUES				
Item #				
30. The use of a standard curriculum ensures equal educational opportunities.				
1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Neutral	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
17—20	7 — 5	2 — 1	2 — 2	1 — 0
31. Bilingualism is a linguistic not a psychological phenomenon.				
1	2	3	4	5
11 — 20	10 — 6	3 — 0	2 — 2	3 — 1
34. Educational policy as it relates to programs for LM children is derived from educational research				
1	2	3	4	5
7 — 14	8 — 4	4 — 3	7 — 6	3 — 2
40. Linguistically different students benefit from native language instruction.				
1	2	3	4	5
1 — 0	0 — 1	3 — 0	1 — 5	14 — 22

The daily journals kept by the teachers were mirrors of the mind and reflected the personal theories and beliefs of each teacher. Comments ranged from negative to positive, pessimism to optimism, and disagreement to agreement. The following quote came from an entry written on the first day of class by teacher #27:

> I am very sensitive to the criticisms about Bilingual Education. Some of the criticisms I hear are that Hispanic children are dropping out of school because they have spent too much time in Bilingual classrooms and not enough English instruction was given to prepare them for our English (language) culture. Another idea that some of these critics have voiced is that Bilinguial Education was designed to allow an ethnic group to fail. Our society must always have a group that lacks sufficient education and which will provide service jobs. God help us if we educate the masses.

Number 27 did not make many changes. In her last entry she outlined major reasons why the students' native languages should not be used. An analysis of Number 27's attitude survey matched views stated in her journal. Obviously she is a teacher that changed little in regard to her theories and beliefs over the four-week period. Number 27 was the teacher who changed the least.

Most of the teachers wrote entries that concerned methods for teaching linguistically different students. The following quotes are representative of the thought processes that the teachers, themselves, observed.

Teacher #17.
I've thought more about how kids learn best. One of the comments made in class concerned expectations. The person seems very caring and tough — with high expectations of the kids. As I reflected on this during the week, I felt more and more that this is true. Kids learn because you expect them to. You set standards and expect that they will meet them. Maybe it's the old adage — you get what you expect.

Teacher #1.
The afternoon session was extremely interesting to me — all about the socio-cultural effects of language. I can now really understand the circle of home/school/community, and how all must come into context for a person to learn best.
With all the reading and the lectures in class, the common themes and emphases are emerging and making increasing sense to me. I understand much better the ideas of a "humanist" approach to teaching children from minority backgrounds, of the importance of their maintaining their cultural identities and the necessity of teachers to have a deep sense of the need for this.

Teacher #32.
In reading "Empowering Minority Students" by Jim Cummins, I got a clear understanding of the T.B.P. [Transitional Bilingual Program]. Through this article and, of course, the class, I could understand what the purpose was in teaching Spanish in the content area. When I started working in the program, I was not very convinced about using the native language in teaching the content areas. I thought that the more English used, the better. I was wrong!

Teacher #5
As I go along with the different aspects of language acquisition and bilingual education, over and over again I see things that relate not only to bilingual education but to many other areas. For example, the student should be the center of the program in every class. The problem is, though, that many teachers are set in their ways, have their programs set up (for years!), and see themselves as knowing what the students "should" know in America's society; also, the students are not usually concerned with where the students come from -- or, rather, they may be interested, but I don't think they are concerned about considering this in making up their plans and curricula.

The comments quoted give us a picture of teachers in the process of changing their theories and beliefs about themselves, their teaching , schools and the students they have come to know. How and why these changes occur is not known. The process of change is a mystery — we can only observe change and try to document what we observe. Are there stages of change that are somewhat consistent? What kinds of activities are most influential? How is new knowledge integrated with old knowledge? These are questions that need to be explored with further inquiry if we are to design pre-service and inservice programs for students of education and teachers.

We must come to understand how the lives of teachers influence their behaviors and how change occurs as a result of one's life experiences and professional experiences. The following interviews and observations of four teachers provide yet another way of understanding how teachers' theories and beliefs affect their classroom behaviors.

INTERVIEWS AND OBSERVATIONS

Teacher one (P.F.) was born in 1952 into a family of five girls and one boy. All of the children attended Catholic elementary, secondary and undergraduate schools. P.F. remarked that she and and her older two sisters all attended the same schools and all became teachers as the choices were limited to motherhood, nursing or teaching. Her one younger sister and brother, on the other hand, have chosen careers in business. P.F. started teaching in a Catholic school where she taught Spanish for five years. She mentioned that her approach to teaching Spanish was very structured and focused on the study of grammar. The curriculum, she said, was based on following the book. After one year she wanted to go on to get a masters degree. She talked to several people and decided to pursue a masters in linguistics with a specialization in English as a second language. When I asked P.F. why she wanted to change from Spanish to ESL she was able to give me several reasons. The major reason was boredom; one year she taught four sections of Spanish 1, one right after the other. Because of the structured, grammatical format of the curriculum, the job became very tedious. She also wanted to get into the public school system because she was dissatisfied with her salary and benefits. She commented that she made very little money and had no insurance coverage or contract. Teachers were also expected to volunteer for numerous extra curricular activities but yet were not compensated for extra work.

P.F. left teaching shortly after she finished her masters degree. She could not find an ESL position and went to work as an educational coordinator

for the education department of a realtors organization where she provided inservice training to realtors. After six months she became dissatisfied and began working in her present position. She has stayed for nine years and will continue to stay because she very much enjoys the students and the people she works with. She now finds teaching very satisfying. The English as a second language department has no set curriculum and she is able to match the curriculum to the characteristics of the students. She also enjoys being able to see the progress that the students make. When I asked P.F. what she would change if she could, she said that she would want to develop a manual that would be helpful to new teachers. The manual would not be a curriculum guide but rather a resource handbook. She also would reduce the size of the beginning ESL classes which sometimes can grow to 35 or 40 students. I then asked P.F. to talk about the recent classes that she had taken. She commented that they had "tied everything together" for her.She said that the methods course and the culture courses helped her to "get kids working together". When I asked her if her attitudes toward language minority students had changed she answered with a resounding "yes". She explained that until she took the culture course she had definite prejudices against certain groups. She feels that her attitudes have changed. She did confess that she feels some resentment against the Lao teachers in her high school because she doesn't see them improving with their teaching or with their use of English. She said that she feels guilty that she has such negative attitudes towareds them. I asked P.F. what plans she has for the future and she replied that she will continue to take classes in order to move up the salary scale. She also said that she is very anxious to begin work on a manual for teachers. After reviewing P.F.'s interview, it becomes apparent that she has undergone a great deal of change throughout her teaching career. By her

own admission, as a result of taking coursework her feelings and beliefs about her students and teaching have changed.

Prior to observing P.F. in class, I spent some time interacting with her and her colleagues in their departmental office as they discussed the local unions' opposition to a plan to create an eight period day which they felt would benefit the students. It was clear that P.F. was an advocate for the students. This also became apparent in her treatment of students in her classes. P.F.'s general behavior reflected an attitude toward her students which was accepting and positive. She made an attempt to interact with as many students as possible throughout the day: as students entered the room, between classes, during free time, and when students were working independently. She also would interact with them on personal topics -- not just topics that related to classroom assignments.

In her interview, P.F. had mentioned that when she taught Spanish her approach had been very structured and grammatical. Her present method in the classes observed was very different from such an approach. Lessons were organized around using language for a purpose: to describe pictures and situations, to play a game, to describe feelings about a topic, and to convey information.

Students did not use a textbook, instead they compiled folders about thematic units and kept dialog journals. They worked in cooperative groups on projects and made use of videos, filmstrips, games and visuals. All of the activities observed seemed to be in sharp contrast to the way in which P.F. taught some twelve years before. Why and how P.F. has changed is not known. It is clear, however, that she has.

Teacher two (D.N.), teaches Spanish as a foreign language and ESL in a large suburban high school which serves an affluent, racially mixed community. The school has a growing number of language minority students, mostly Asian, Indian and Hispanic.

D.N. was born in a large mid-western city and lived there until she was four. The family then moved to the suburbs. After graduating from high school, D.N. went on to college and majored in Spanish. She was married in her senior year and after graduation quickly found a job. She taught for two years before beginning a family. After having children, she did not teach again for several years. In between children, jobs and moves, D.N. earned a masters degree in counseling which she has never used. She has now taught in her present position for seventeen years. I asked her why she decided to go back and take courses after seventeen years. She said that she wanted to advance on the salary scale. When I asked her if she regretted not using her masters degree in counseling, she said no as it has helped her to better deal with her students.

I asked D.N. to talk about her teaching before she took classes. She described it as being very structured and grammar-based. She added that she did not stray from the book and tried to finish everything that was outlined by the department chairman. I then asked D.N. how her teaching has changed. She said that she now models corrections covertly, rather than overtly correcting students. She uses more pictures, more gestures, hands-on activities and less grammatically-based activities. She is more understanding about allowing pause time for students who are responding. I asked her if the Foundations course has helped and she said that now she treats kids who are taking Spanish as their third language, differently. She used to be impatient with them because they

seemed slower. She now empathizes with the immigrant experience. She has shown the movie "The Long Journey Home" to her ESL students and has gotten them to talk about their immigration to the United States. She also is much more aware of culture and the role that it plays in the learning process. She joked that her favorite phrase now is "Don't worry." She even played the song "Don't Worry, Be Happy" for her ESL students. She mentioned that because of taking a course about culture, she had interjected more culturally relevant materials into the curriculum. D.N. now plans to get a second masters degree in curriculum and instruction.

D.N.'s classroom behavior did, in fact, reflect a communicative approach to second language teaching. She had planned activities for beginning students that focus the student's attention on using language to communicate personal information about their families, personal appearance and friends. She used visuals to make her explanations comprehensible and, in fact, organized the lesson around visuals and actual objects. When students were assigned worksheets, they were allowed to collaborate and interact in pairs or small groups.

Her advanced students were using a literature based approach. Activities for these students involved interacting with text, discussing characters, events, changing settings, feelings and possible outcomes. D.N. placed students in a large circle so that students were facing one another. She encouraged them to participate and expand on brief responses. The students were coached through skits that they had created based on characters from the stories. D.N. used a great deal of praise with students and always explained why the praise was warranted. She also used a great deal of humor, yet was never sarcastic nor humorously insulting to individuals.

D.N. maintained the interest of the class by creating a challenging pace. Students must pay close attention or they could lose the rhythm of the conversation or explanation. D.N. used a large number of the techniques that were emphasized in the Foundations course: a Natural Approach to second language learning based on meaningful communication; a whole language (integrated) approach to developing literacy in the second language, and activities that foster equal opportunity in the classroom. It became apparent that if D.N. had been a teacher who followed the book she was not one now. D.N. used the text as reinforcement for lessons already presented and not as a direct teaching tool. Clearly, D.N.'s teaching behaviors indicated tht she had recently changed her basic approach to classroom instruction.

Teacher Three (N.C.) teaches in a self-contained third grade Spanish bilingual classroom in a middle-class suburban community. The school is a K-6 school which has a growing language minority population.

N.C. was born and raised in a middle-class ethnic neighborhood, in a large city. She attended traditional city schools and after high school, she attended a small college where she majored in education. She commented that the teacher preparation program at that college was not very good. I asked her to explain and she said that they did not read about current teaching techniques in the m thods classes; instead, they learned how to thread a movie projector. They didn't learn about theories of learning, classroom management, or anything else that she now considers necessary. I asked her where she learned to speak Spanish. She explained that it was her second major in college and that she later took graduate courses in Spanish. She also commented that she improved her speaking ability while working as an aide in bilingual classes.

Immediately after college, she taught fifth grade for four years. "As I look back, it was so traditional," she commented. She felt that she taught as she had once been taught. She then had two children and stayed home for ten years. Gradually she reentered teaching by substituting and working as an aide. When she was an aide, she was encouraged to take graduate courses in language minority education. She took six classes in one year. I then asked N.C. how her teaching had changed as a result of these courses. She commented that as a result of taking the methods course for teaching bilingual students. she now uses cooperative grouping. She then commented that the single most influential course was a methods course for teaching English as a second language. As a result of that course, she uses techniques such as chants, music, language experience, higher level questioning strategies and visualization techniques. She also tries to foster thinking skills or metacognitive strategies. She now teaches ESL through literature and also uses sustained silent reading and reading aloud. N.C. also teaches story structure and uses a shared book approach. She uses big books for the lower readers.

N.C. commented that the Foundations course had also helped. "It gave me a philosophy. Now I take kids' strengths and design a curriculum around that. For example, writing about "The Chocolate Touch" was a suggestion that came from students; it was student generated. Now I gear the curriculum to kids' backgrounds. I am now especially conscious of developing socialization skills in students."

N.C. went on to say that she now uses a lot of language experience in science. She had the students plant seeds and sketch their growth every few weeks. She mentioned that they are also using language experience to teach Spanish to nine English-speaking fifth and sixth graders once a week at

at lunch time. These same children also tutor in the bilingual classroom.

She has also organized a "buddy" system between her students and a class of English-speaking second graders. They get together once every other week to work on art projects together.

N.C. went on to talk about her perceived role as a public relations person for ESL and bilingual education. She is on a committee which meets to discuss making the school's curriculum more multicultural. She feels that it is her role to make teachers and administrators feel that a multicultural curriculum is more than eating ethnic food and listening to ethnic music. She comments that she feels like an advocate for the language minority students and their parents.

By observing N.C., I was able to see that she certainly was not teaching as she had been taught. N.C. organizes the curriculum into thematic units and plans activities that integrate reading, math, science, language arts and social studies. She has placed students into cooperative mixed ability groups and utilizes her teacher's aide as a group facilitator. The classroom structure is loose and the students observed obviously feel free to express themselves, walk around, explore, use the washroom, ask questions, interact with other classmates and make choices about how to carry out an assignment. N.C. encourages students to take risks, to work in a collaborative manner and to occasionally work independently. Students were observed reading silently, completing a group task card, working on a creative art project, role playing and listening to a story read aloud. Each activity was somewhat related by different dimensions of a central theme. On one afternoon about two weeks before Valentine's Day, the students listened to a love story, brainstormed about "places and people we love," made creative valentines and learned about the most important organ in our bodies -- the heart.

N.C. also was observed to purposefully foster equal opportunity in the classroom. She balanced knowledge-recall kinds of questions with higher level questions designed to make the students relate classroom topics to their personal lives. She demonstrated a genuine interest in student comments that revealed something personal and made sure that students had an opportunity to participate in ways in which they felt comfortable. She demonstrated an ability to "read" students, to affirm them when they appeared to need encouragement and to leave them alone when they were fully engaged in a task. N.C. also showed an incredible amount of patience. Several of the students were still not able to stay on task when an adult was not present. N.C. was observed to facilitate in one group while she had to constantly attend to three wandering students. This third grade class and this third grade teacher were anything but traditional. N.C. was very proud of her students who, except for two recent arrivals, were all reading between a 2.0 and a 3.5 reading level in English as measured on a local reading inventory. N.C. seemed to be a far cry from the very traditional fifth grade teacher that she had been.

Teacher Four (C.M.) teaches pull out ESL in a changing racially mixed suburban K-8 school district. The community's white, ethnic, blue collar families are gradually moving away and are being replaced with language minority families.

C.M. was born into a military family; her father was in the Navy and they moved around a lot. She went to all public schools and ended up in a very small town of 948 people. After graduating from high school, C.M. attended two different state universities where she majored in art education. After college she taught art and American government in a high school. After one year, she

went to Ethipia with the Peace Corp. She was trained for this assignment and took classes in Teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESL) and Amharic -- the language of the Amhara people in Ethiopia. When I asked C.M. how she felt about being in Ethiopia for two years, she replied that she got more than she gave. She went on to say that this represents her philosphy in life in general. She said that she worked hard and she liked the people. C.M. went on to explain that Ethiopia was the only country that wasn't colonized. She commented that when she traveled in Africa, she noticed that blacks in different countries perceived whites in different ways. She admired the strength of the people in Ethiopia.

When she cam back to the United States, she worked for a federal program funded to help poor families. She was part of a team who recruited for VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America). During this time, she married and later moved to a large metropolitan area where she taught in several parochial schools.

C.M.'s first child was born after seven years of marriage. Shortly after that she and her husband started a pottery business. They then moved, and she went to work part-time teaching art in a suburban Catholic school. During this time, she also finished a masters degree in art. She also began conducting workshops and teaching classes for a small educational college. She taught part-time for six years and then went back to school to get an elementary education certificate. She took ESL courses and started teaching ESL two years ago. I asked C.M. which course she considered to be the most helpful. She considered the Foundations course to be the most helpful because the course dealt with basic issues -- the empowerment of teachers and students, and methods

such as cooperative learning. She mentioned that she liked the basic philosophy of the course, because it reflected her personal philosophy of education. When asked if her teaching had changed, C.M. replied that she has become more true to her basic philosophy. She doesn't believe things fit into boxes. She believes teachers should always expand across the curriculum. I asked her to describe the part that has changed. She commented that now she uses different methods such as cooperative learning. C.M. indicated that she had always encouraged group work but now she groups "scientifically." She also believes that as she has gotten older, she is more at ease to take risks. She enjoys classroom activities that give her real things to do. She is using a lot of methods that she learned, e.g., cooperative learning, a whole language approach to literacy development and sheltered instruction in the content areas.

C.M. is about to begin another masters program in curriculum and instruction. Not too surprisingly, since she has been encouraged by district personnel to go back to school and to get an administrator's certificate. C.M. was observed teaching three pull out classes: ten second graders, six first graders and fourteen fourth and fifth graders. Her classroom style fits a philosophy which focuses on empowering students. It was a tight fit between what she said in the interview and what she did in these classes.

C.M. focused on a cooperative group approach in two of the three classes. Students, second graders and fifth graders, were given a great deal of autonomy to make choices in how they were to complete classroom assignment. Both groups were in the process of publishing big books. The students were obviously well acquainted with the process and began soon after the period started. Students were observed negotiating roles and tasks. When a group had difficulty

agreeing, C.M. stepped in to provide direction. She appeared to stay on the outside but yet was aware of what was going on in each group. After each group finished, C.M. led a discussion about the process. She guided the students to verbalize what was done to complete the task, and she focused on metacognitive and problem-solving strategies.

C.M. appeared to minimize deviations from good classroom behavior and encouraged students to exert pressure on those students who were not on task. When C.M. was working with the first graders she appeared to be using many of the same strategies that she had used with the older students but without success. When we discussed this later she explained to me that she expects the first graders to begin to respond soon and that she is confident that they will gradually "catch on" to what is expected of them. The first graders listened to a story being read aloud and were asked to predict, guess about synthesis and evaluate events in the story.

It was evident that C.M. felt very comfortable with the methods she was using -- especially cooperative grouping. The students were also comfortable with the process as evidenced by the speed at which they were able to complete individual tasks (illustrating, copying, writing, transcribing), and by the ease with which they were able to verbalize the steps and results.

C.M. was observed to be true to her basic philosophy of empowering the students with knowledge and with self-esteem.

Findings and Implications

It is clear that based on observations and interviews that these four teachers have changed over the course of the last nine months. By their own admissions, they have incorporated models of teaching into their teaching repertoires. These techniques were observed in their classes and all four teachers appeared to be expert and comfortable with these stratregies -- an indication that they had been using them routinely for some time. Another way in which these teachers seemed changed is that all four had decided to go on to complete another masters degree or another certificate or to continue taking more courses. This appears to be an indication that these teachers feel an increased sense of efficacy. All of these teachers had mentioned that they considered it important to empower their students with a sense of pride. It appears that these teachers are empowered, themselves, with an increasing awareness of their teaching abilities.

These findings do seem to foster a sense of cautious optimism. While it is obvious that gaining new knowledge and having time to reflect in a supportive environment are worthwhile activities, it can not be assumed with such limited data that there exists a casual relationship between these events and teacher change. We still do not know how change occurs, what initiates change, or what stages of change are possible. These are all questions for further inquiry.

But what can be assumed is that if schools are to change, then teachers must change. We must continue to search for ways in which we can encourage positive changes in the lives of teachers.

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